



Meeting Minutes

Morris • Sussex • Warren Workforce Investment Board

Open Meeting

Date: October 30, 2014

Location: The Lackland Center at Centenary College

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members

Marie Betlow (Job Search Central), Jenn Carpinteri (Morris County Department of Human Services), Tammy Case (Fulton Bank), David Hollowell (D & D Associates, **WIB Chair**), Carol Hults (Highlands State Bank), Carl Jablonski (Randolph One-Stop Career Center), Karen Kubert (Warren County Department of Human Services), Rosalie Lamonte (Morris, Sussex and Warren County Schools), Dianna Morrison (Center for Prevention & Counseling), Terry Newhard (NORWESCAP).

Guests

John Ehret (NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development), Eva Fernandez (NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development), Ray Gara (Warren County Technical School), Michael Gowdy (Morris County School of Technology), Joanne Hala (United Way of Northern NJ), Sean Hendricks (NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development), Donald Hogan (NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development), Dennis Mudrick (Sussex County Freeholders), Tom O'Connor (NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development), Kyersten Rozanski (Project Self-Sufficiency), Irene Schrader (Morris County Vo-Tech), Ed Smith (Warren County Freeholders), Lech Szymanski (Phillipsburg One-Stop Career Center).

Staff

Jack Patten (**WIB Director**), Donna Buchanan (Director of Employment & Training Services [ETS] and **One-Stop Operator**), Marin Regenthal-Garland (Secretary to the One-Stop Operator and ETS Office Manager), Sallie Sullivan (Secretary to the WIB Director).

ABSENT:

Members

William Austin, Paul Boudreau, Anne Marie Brown, George Chando, Kenneth Edwards, Mary Emilius, David File, David Fiore, Ann Marie Flake, Robert Glowacky, Jim Jones, George Krevet, Paul Mazur, Scott McGill, Gus Modla, Scott Moffitt, Carol Novrit, Tom Nugent, Kevin O'Donnell, Robert Peabody, Peter Rizzo, Steve Sitek, Marty Telles, Mary Tucker, Ed Yaw, Sue Zukoski.

Prior to the October 30, 2014 Open Meeting, the following documents were posted on the WIB website (www.mswwib.org) for review: Open Meeting minutes (July 31, 2014); One-Stop Career Center Committee minutes (August 5, 2014); Youth Investment Council minutes (September 16, 2014); Disability Committee minutes (October 1, 2014); Executive Committee minutes (October 21, 2014);

Literacy Committee minutes (October 15, 2014); WIB Director Report; and, One-Stop Operator Report. All documents and current committee minutes were also available at the meeting.

The Oversight Committee electronically reviews budget, performance and monitoring reports monthly. Documents shared with the Oversight Committee were available at the Open Meeting.

Committee Discussions

At 9:00 a.m., WIB members and guests visited committee stations and conferred with the chairs and staff on committee and other WIB issues. The attendees took the opportunity to network with each other and WIB committee chairs, WIB Chair David Hollowell, WIB Director Jack Patten and One-Stop Operator Donna Buchanan.

WIB Business Meeting

Meeting Opening Remarks

At 9:30 a.m., WIB Chair David Hollowell called the meeting to order and read the Public Meeting Notice. He then welcomed all and introduced new WIB member Jenn Carpinteri, Director of the Morris County Department of Human Services. He also welcomed Warren County Freeholder Director Ed Smith and Sussex County Freeholder Dennis Mudrick. All present introduced themselves.

Board Business

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Comments

WIB Director Jack Patten reported that the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which had been lapsed for seven years, has been replaced by the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). Regulations for WIOA will be published January 22, 2015. The WIB will collect comments on the new law, and will submit comments to the US Department of Labor after January 22. The new law includes a 90% hold harmless provision, ensuring no less than 90% of the previous year's funding. Jack said this will be a big help in planning programs from year to year, something that wasn't available in the past.

WIA and WIOA, Side-by-Side: National Association of State Workforce Agencies (naswa.org)

Jack informed those present of an excellent interpretive document on the website of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (www.naswa.org). The document features side-by-side comparisons of the current WIA law versus the WIOA. Some of the main changes in the new law are:

- 1) **Relaxed eligibility for youth programs** - Recipients of free or low-cost lunches in school systems will automatically be eligible for WIOA services. One of the things to be determined is how long eligible status is retained once a youth leaves school.
- 2) **Ability to spend up to 20% of the grant to train employed/incumbent workers** - The WIB has done this in the past on a very small scale with great success. This will enable this training on a larger scale. The goal of such incumbent worker training is twofold: 1) Having highly trained, highly effective contributing employees for local businesses, and 2) Raising the level of area workers to self sufficiency.
- 3) **Performance measures** - The new law expands the measures to all the partners in the workforce investment system, which includes: Title I (the One-Stop Career Center system), the Employment Service, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education. All these entities will now be subject to core performance measures for all federally-funded employment and training programs.

Two of the measures haven't been determined yet. The thorniest one is effectiveness of services to business. It's probable that the new performance measures won't go into effect July 1 when the rest of the law does. It's also possible that implementation of the whole law will be delayed because of the performance metrics and other regulatory issues that may or may not be defined by then. The hope is that it does start July 1, providing the flexibility needed to exercise the new provisions of the law to help jobseekers and business customers.

Jack asked that those interested in submitting comments to the WIB contact him by email (jpatten@co.morris.nj.us) or phone (973-829-8661). They will be included in the comments that WIB staff and One-Stop staff develop.

Employability Skills Taskforce: SETC/NJ Business and Industry Association

Jack reported that another issue coming to the forefront is lack of employability (soft) skills, in the general workforce and among job applicants. After years of uncoordinated and unconnected initiatives, the State has realized the importance of employability skills and even refers to it as a crisis. The lack of employability skills among workers in the workforce hinders New Jersey's businesses, labor market and economy.

The State has now convened the Employability Skills Taskforce and the WIB is represented on it. There is wide representation on the Taskforce, including K-12 educators who are now very eager to become involved in this process. K-12 does many things that impart the employability skills and doesn't get recognized for them. They have indicated they are eager to build employability skills into curricula and other activities, and to become a full partner in raising the employability skills of the workforce.

The Taskforce's report is due to be released in early November. After approval by the SETC, it will be widely circulated with action plans for every entity involved in workforce development in the State; critical among those is the WIB. The Morris-Sussex-Warren WIB has done some small employability skills training that has been successful but has not been connected to the overall effort. Hopefully that will change and all the resources that exist around the state for employability skills will find their way into a repository which can be accessed by any interested party. Jack said the Taskforce is particularly interested in development of assessment and curricula for teaching employability skills.

Jack said he's studied employability skills for a long time, and feels the principal problem with the training as it exists is that it is written at grade levels that are too high for intended audiences. He shared his experience that 80% of soft skills information on the Internet is about engineering and high-end IT. He also said there is scarcely a mention of entry-level, retail, or tourism workers, among whom the greatest deficits exist, and they are the most obvious as the economy gets better. He summarized by telling the group, "We need three sets of curricula - one with two syllable words, one with three syllable words, and one with four syllable words, to accommodate the various workers in the workforce."

Karen Kubert asked Jack if they were pointing out employability skills deficiencies to jobseekers. Jack answered that they were, and said they can only do so much within the context of One-Stop services. He said one of the real effective strategies and techniques is telling them straight up, "You are not going to get a job because - you're not dressed right, you're not looking them in the eye, etc. This is how you can fix it." He said we're at that level now and you need to be direct.

Dianna Morrison shared that Pathways for Prosperity is very involved with soft skills as part of a holistic approach to client services.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Meeting Topics

Labor Market Discussion

Jack opened the labor market discussion with some very good news. He informed the group that the unemployment data came out yesterday and was quite good. Unemployment has gone down to 4.6% in Morris County, and down to 5.3% in both Sussex and Warren Counties. Within the last year, Sussex County has been over 8% and Warren County over 9%, so these are dramatic improvements. He congratulated everybody and thanked them for their good work, to the extent that all their efforts play into these improvements. He said it may seem that we're all just a little part of the process, but all the little parts add up in one way or another.

Jack also mentioned, courtesy of John Ehret, more good news for Warren County. A specialized hospital network, Coordinated Health, has announced that it is expanding its patient services into the Strykers Crossing Shopping Center in Phillipsburg. They are also opening another facility in Lopatcong on ten acres, scheduled for early 2015. Jack noted that Warren County Community College is a premier trainer of health care personnel, so this is wonderful news for the labor market and Warren County.

Jack also brought up the ongoing issue of a shortage of truck drivers. He indicated there has been a great deal of difficulty recruiting truck drivers due to the hours and the demands of the job. A related issue is difficulty at the ports, which are very crowded and backed up, causing the truck drivers to spend a good deal of time idle while waiting. While an entry-level truck driver can make \$60,000 to \$70,000 the first year, many truck drivers who took the job when unable to find other work that they wanted are now leaving due to the improving economy. Jack feels more attention should be paid to the real effects of this shortage - how it limits New Jersey's ability to move goods to other areas, and the obvious effects of that on business. The WIB trains many truck drivers every year, and is always looking for new training providers.

Marie Betlow of Job Search Central shared the top sectors of growth, which are:

- Government: An emphasis on the Judiciary with major growth in that area in executive and administrative positions.
- Education and Health Services: An emphasis on nursing and medical management.
- Professional and Business Services: An emphasis on computers. She attended a job fair yesterday where a company hired new graduates with no experience for projects with .net developing.
- Trade and Transportation: An emphasis on truck driving for the food industry. For instance, an individual delivering for US Foods, working two to three years, is earning \$90,000.
- Construction: An emphasis on "Hard Hatted Women". Marie spoke with Carl Jablonski before the meeting about "Women in Construction", and said we will be seeing more women involved with the actual hands-on side of the construction business.

Jack mentioned that, before the meeting, he and Carol Hults were discussing expansion in banking, and part of that was the long-held belief that the neighborhood bank was going to go away. That apparently has not been the case. He asked Carol to elaborate on their conversation.

Carol Hults of Highlands State Bank reported that they are expanding and have opened a couple of new small branches. She said people still want that face-to-face experience in banking. **Tammy Case** of Fulton Bank agreed that there still seems to be a need for "brick and mortar" banks.

Ed Smith, Warren County Freeholder Director, spoke to the group regarding New Jersey Senate Bill 1240 (S1240), for which Senator Steven Oroho of District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties) is a primary sponsor. The bill would "clarify municipal planning or zoning authority," and provide Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act exemption "for certain development along commercial corridors in the Highlands Region".

Freeholder Director Smith indicated the properties affected by the bill represent only a fraction of the protected region, and were not areas that were inaccessible before the Highlands Act. He mentioned that, in many cases, utilities and infrastructure were already in place when the Highlands Act took effect. He also stressed the difference that the bill could make in terms of jobs and economic recovery for the area, so that the people who live there can make a living.

Rosalie Lamonte of Morris, Sussex and Warren County Schools said there is still a shortage of school business administrators, which involves a certification process and a Master's degree. She indicated math, science, school nurses and library media are also strong needs.

John Ehret of the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development said the average unemployment number in Morris County last year was 6.3%. The Sussex County average was 7.8% and the Warren County average was 7%. He indicated Manufacturing has been coming on strong, and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities for the year is up 5,000 jobs. In addition to the region, John handles Life Sciences for the State. The Pharmaceutical industry depends on the chemicals which come from the ports, so transportation is important to them. In this area, 1,500 jobs were lost in the last quarter.

With regard to employability (soft) skills, John Ehret told the group that he sits in on a lot of human resource meetings, and can attest that one of their biggest problems is people not having the necessary employability skills. Carol Hults added that she thinks a lack of leadership development skills is huge. They see otherwise skilled people who lack this. Jack indicated that he feels attendance and punctuality skills are by far the most important.

Jack thanked all for the lively discussion, and for sharing their labor market information.

Jack then introduced Thomas Farnan, Senior Account Executive of CIMQUEST Manufacturing Solutions.

Presentation – 3D Printer Demonstration

Thomas Farnan of CIMQUEST Manufacturing Solutions shared information on the role, and pros and cons, of 3D printing in Advanced Manufacturing. CIMQUEST is one of two or three major manufacturers of 3D printers.

Thomas provided some history and information on manufacturing to the group with a detailed and instructive PowerPoint slide show. With regard to 3D printers, he indicated there is no learning curve. A project in the prototype stage can actually be printed and tested before going to hard tooling. Once the prototype has been created, it's a simple matter of hitting the "print" button. As a result, companies don't have to take their expensive CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machine offline to do a simple job (CNC is the most expensive form of manufacturing; the machines can cost anywhere from \$50,000 to well over \$1 million.)

Thomas said CIMQUEST works with 3-4,000 machine shops, and knows what they need to focus on to stay competitive. He is seeing 3D printers being installed in machine shops; it is a help to them, rather than a threat.

3D printing is a low volume application and very slow; a small part that he passed around took approximately 3-4 hours to print on the 3D printer. However, it is a much quicker way to get a design to the customer.

WIB Chair David Hollowell thanked Mr. Farnan for his presentation, and informed attendees that the next WIB Open Meeting would take place via conference call on Thursday, January 29, 2015. Chair Hollowell also congratulated long-time WIB member Karen Kubert, Director of the Warren County Department of Human Services, on her 30 years of service to Warren County. In addition, he encouraged her in her decision to embark on a new entrepreneurial venture.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.